

Remarks:

Claims 1-20 are pending.

Claims 1-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as obvious in view of U.S. Patent Publication 2002/0073343 to Ziskind et al. (hereinafter "Ziskind") and U.S. Patent No. 6,665,389 to Haste (hereinafter "Haste")

The applicants respectfully disagree. Specifically, in order to maintain a rejection of 35 U.S.C. 103 the Examiner must establish 1) presence of all claimed elements in the art; 2) a motivation to modify or combine the references in the art to arrive at the claimed invention; and 3) a likelihood of success.

Here, it is respectfully submitted has failed to establish presence of all claimed elements in the art; and a motivation to modify or combine the references to arrive at the claimed invention.

Firstly, the Examiner takes the position that a person of ordinary skill with knowledge of Ziskind would modify Ziskind in view of Haste to arrive at the claimed invention.

Ziskind, however, is directed to a system allowing exchange of instant Internet messages between users of different instant messenger services. Instant messaging serves a fundamentally different purpose than introduction services, the subject of the present application. Instant messaging is designed to allow individuals, regardless of their specific interest, to communicate with each other. Thus, allowing users of one instant messaging service access to users of another is consistent with the underlying purpose of instant messaging, and is in principal no different than allowing subscribers of different phone companies to communicate with each other. As detailed in the background of the present application, introduction services are designed to introduce specific persons sharing a common interest, for, for example, social or dating purposes. As such, introduction service providers typically operate closed systems that only allow limited access between subscribers. A person of ordinary skill would thus have no

motivation to use instant messaging systems and modify them to arrive at an introduction, as suggested by the Examiner.

More fundamentally, however, even if Ziskind and Haste were combined, a person of ordinary skill would not arrive at the claimed invention, as neither Ziskind nor Haste disclose all of the elements of independent claims 1, 12 or 17.

Specifically, as claimed in claim 1,

“users associated with said first introduction service provider, access to selected ones of said second plurality of greetings, based on criteria associated with an originator of each of said selected ones of said second greetings, and criteria set by said first introduction service provider.”

That is, users of a first introduction service provider are given access to greetings of selected users of a second service provider. The selection is based on criteria associated with the originators of each of the second greetings, and criteria set by the first service provider. In this way, the effective number of users whose greetings are apparently available to users of the first service provider is increased, by pooling greetings of users of the first and second service providers. At the same time sensitivities of the users of the first service provider, and the service provider itself are respected, by selecting which greetings of which users of the second service provider access are provided based on the originator of each of the second greetings, and criteria set by the first service provider. Example criteria used by the first service provider include the gender, age and interest of users of the second service provider.

This is neither disclosed or suggested by Ziskind or Haste.

As the Examiner notes, Ziskind limits access to the Internet messenger system based on the identity of users wishing to use that system. That is, only authorized users are permitted access to the system of Ziskind. Once these authorized users are given access, they appear to have access to all known users of other systems. There is no

suggestion otherwise. This is entirely consistent with the nature of instant messaging: authorized users are provided broad access to each other and no filtering appears to be required. This, however, is quite distinct from what is claimed. That is, Ziskind does not suggest any selection of users of other systems to which access the user of the Ziskind system are provided access.

Haste, on the other hand, only limits access between users of the same system.

Thus, neither Haste nor Ziskind discloses all the limitations of independent claims 1, 12 and 17 and thus no combination of Ziskind or Haste would lead a person of ordinary skill to the invention as claimed.

In view of the foregoing, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 of independent claims 1, 12 and 17 and those claims dependent thereon is respectfully requested.

New claims 18-20 are presented for consideration by the Examiner. It is believed that these claims, too, are in condition for allowance.

No new matter has been added by these amendments.


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In view of the foregoing, favourable reconsideration and allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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